all was that which resolved to summon an Inter-Allied Naval and Shipping Conference to consider the best methods of co-ordinating Allied resources at sea. It is incredible that no such conference had ever been held before. In fact, the Allied War Directors never seemed to have realised that the transport question was at the root of most of their difficulties.

Gave birth to Inter-Allied Naval and Shipping Conference

The Central Powers had an undoubted advantage over the Allies in the fact that they were operating on internal lines. We had the paramount advantage of the command of the sea. We ought to have realised both these facts with all their implications, and taken immediate steps to neutralise the enemy superiority due to their central position while profiting more by our own superiority on the sea.

But we were now entering on the fourth campaign of the War, and the Allies had decided for the first time to sit down to a thorough examination of one of the most vital problems with which they were confronted. In that respect the Rome discussions were of great practical value.

I was unable, however, to persuade the French to accept even in principle the idea of a combined spring offensive on the Italian Front, and Cadorna's lukewarmness was fatal to my insistence. In view of the attempt to fasten the whole responsibility for the Nivelle offensive on to me, because of my strenuous

My plan for Italian offensive rejected

effort to make it a success once it was determined upon, I have felt it necessary to quote in full the passages in which early in January I urged the concentration of our offensive gun power on the Italian Front as a substitute for the project of a great